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The Newer Deal: Social Work and Religion in Partnership. Raam A. Chaan with Robert J. Wineburg and Stephanie C. Boddie.

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behavior among the proponents of charity, stifles effective government intervention and co-opts radical groups that seek to promote progressive social change.

Wagner is polemical but appropriately hard-hitting. Focusing first on the historical development of philanthropy, he exposes the way Christian 'altruism' forced Native Americans to convert to Christianity, and then proceeded to enslave, dispossess and even kill them. He also shows how the industrial barons of the late 19th century used philanthropy for their own, self-serving purposes. These practices continue today on a vast scale but are heavily subsidized by tax payers, limiting alternative and potentially more effective public social service programs.

This book is to be commended for facilitating critical thinking about a topic severely lacking in critical analysis. It challenges the complacency which characterizes much of the literature on philanthropy today. Although it will outrage some, it is well written and engaging, and deserves extensive discussion. It should be prescribed reading for all social work students and those in non-profit management programs.

Raam A. Cnaan with Robert J. Wineburg and Stephanie C. Boddie, *The Newer Deal: Social Work and Religion in Partnership*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. \$49.50 hardcover, \$22.50 papercover.

Although religious organizations have historically catered to the needy, the expansion of government social programs during the middle decades of this century gradually diminished their importance. It was widely accepted in social policy circles in the 1950s and 1960s that both secular and religious charitable effort would dwindle as government social programs expanded. This attitude was reinforced by the emergence of social work which promoted the professionalization of charitable activity. Help to those in need would not be provided by well-meaning individuals but by professionally qualified social workers, trained in scientific methods and skilled in solving human problems.

These beliefs were seriously challenged during the 1980s when politicians on the political right began systematically to attack both state social service provision and social welfare professionalization. Since President Reagan first appealed to the

religious community to assume a greater responsibility for social welfare, many conservative politicians have reiterated this idea. During the 2000 presidential campaign, candidate George W. Bush promised that, if elected, he would expand religious involvement in social welfare. Many conservative social policy thinkers have also criticized the role of social workers in the provision of social services. Social workers and bureaucrats, they claim, have failed miserably to solve the problem of social need. It is time, they contend, for the churches and temples once again to assume their historic responsibility for social welfare.

In view of these developments, Ram Cnaan and his colleagues have produced a timely book. It is also an important book. The authors show how the role of religious organizations in social welfare has been neglected and even slighted by advocates of state welfare and professional social work. However, the authors are optimistic, arguing that there is scope for a new partnership between professional social work and religious organizations. It is possible, they suggest to forge a newer deal in which government, professional social workers and the religious community combine efforts to address the nation's pressing social needs. In addition to its hopeful outlook, the book is extremely well documented and comprehensive containing a wealth of detailed information on the complex relationship between social work and religion. It should not be viewed as a book for specialists interested in religious issues but as required reading for all social workers and those concerned with the future of social welfare.